

# GIFs to Augment Content Vocabulary for Hotel Management Learners

Sushyni Kothuri<sup>1</sup> Nageswari.R<sup>2</sup>

1. Research Associate, School of Social Sciences and Languages, VIT University, Vellore, India

2. Assistant Professor, School of Social Sciences and Languages, VIT University, Vellore, India

## Abstract

Gifs (Graphic Interchange Format) are looping videos with no sound and captures our attention. In this experimental study we decided to incorporate Gifs to develop learners' content vocabulary. The study has chosen 60 students from two hotel management colleges. Research findings reveal that the Gifs did contribute to students' improvement in vocabulary. Since they had active attention and grasped the vocabulary used through Gifs.

**Keywords:** Graphic interchange format, Content and language integrated learning, content vocabulary, Vocabulary instruction.

## 1. Introduction

It is significant to note that the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom enjoys accessibility to knowledge, information dissemination and context for creative learning through rapid invasion of new technology prompted by e-learning and m-learning. This globalization ignited the desire for improvement in performance. The overview of this paper is to project the effects of GIFs in classroom.

## 2. Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)

Language is a shared primary concern, with subject learning. CLIL is an acronym for Content and Language Integrated Learning. It is an approach to teach the content of curricular subjects through English. It links multiple intelligence, teaching, multi-modality, activities, cooperative learning, and a unified learning experience. Coyle et al (2010:1) define CLIL as a dual approach concerning education 'in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching both content and language'. Teaching learners in a second language or a foreign language 'is as old as education itself' (Coyle et al.2010:2) but the methodologies were successful at language and content learning by providing an enjoyable experience to the pupils (Marsh,2010). The educational concept of Content and Language Integrated Learning is an invaluable tool in promoting learner understanding of a language. It is one of the crucial added-value propositions of education which has an emphasis on the integration of subject and language learning.

It is possible for teachers to integrate fun and work by carefully engineering activities to achieve both. This entails setting a time limit, clarifying the rules, sometimes giving prizes, and generating enthusiasm to involve the learners. The present study has implemented an activity with a help of a tool related to the context.

Teaching preferences concerning the tools of various teaching methods is assumed to be one of the important factors that can significantly overshadow learners' educational experiences. The incorporation of new tools as supplementary can be carried out specifically with an aim to cater to different individuals' needs and preferences. Innovative methods and tools like GIFs are commonly believed to be much more efficient in enhancing students' performances.

Moreover, English language learners need visual aids to demonstrate their knowledge. Classrooms in general display GIFs can be useful resources. Depending on what topic they are trying to explain to the students, GIFs can be of great help.

CLIL is a dual- focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching both content and language with the objectives of promoting both content and language mastery to pre-defined levels. (Marsh et al.200)

There are several aspects of this definition and which are really important. One is the fact that CLIL consists of teaching both content and the language in an integrated way. Second thing is the fact of using an additional language to do this teaching and learning process. This means that we are using a language which is not our student's mother tongue or which may not be our own mother tongue. This is important because it influences the way we are going to do the teaching. Changing the medium of instruction requires changing the method of instruction.

Josephine Moate (2010) surveyed on sociocultural approach prior to turning specifically to CLIL. A sociocultural perspective has been adopted for two reasons: first the emphasis placed on language as the primary tool mediating the construction of knowledge and understanding, and secondly the recognition of the fundamentally social nature of learning. From a sociocultural perspective, knowledge is understood as a historically constructed, culturally and socially contextualized entity instantiated in language. The conceptual

and cultural tools offered in sociocultural educational research and in particular support the interactive, participatory nature of CLIL and provide an interesting basis for developing the pedagogy and practice of CLIL on the future.

Vilmante Liubiniene (2008) study on “developing Listening skills in CLIL” shows that pre-listening activities help the learner to make decisions what to listen for and to put the emphasis on the content meaning while listening. First student need to activate their knowledge of the topic, second, a purpose for listening combined with specific listening tasks must be established. Thus the students are encouraged to look for the specific information they need to listen for and the degree of detail required. Using all the available information, students can make predictions to anticipate what they might hear. Teachers must be aware of the fact that listening in a CLIL environment is different from listening in a content lesson conducted in the mother-tongue and from listening comprehension tasks in language lessons. Several factors contribute to the difficulty of the listening task. Developing good listening skills is an inherent part of the whole learning process. It cannot be taken apart and analysed as a separate skill without the general context of CLIL or any other educational methodology. Research indicates (Liubiniene, 2008), from the language point of view, CLIL students develop better oral communication skills, they improve listening skills, they also develop reading skills and academic writing, as well as acquire the skills of presentation and develop ability to answer spontaneously to questions. Thus they definitely improve both subject and foreign language competence.

How to bring CLIL in to classroom:

1. Choose an interesting topic
2. Choose the target vocabulary
3. Choose a reading text
4. Create a graphic organizer that allows students think critically and analyse the information they have learnt
5. Let students use this information creatively

### 3.Methods and materials

The purpose of this experimental study is to look at how CLIL activities can develop the vocabulary of the learners. Researchers firmly believe that Vocabulary is one of the most important factors to learn language. They integrated CLIL with activities to enhance students' content vocabulary.

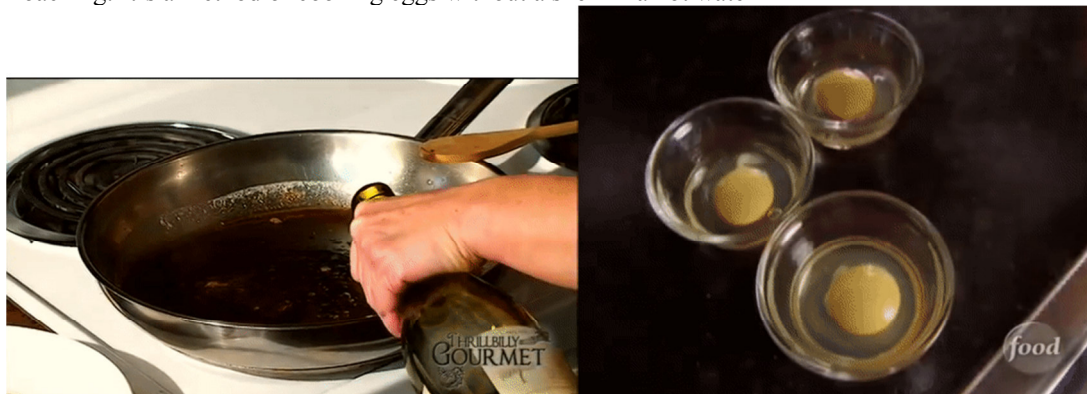
In this study GIFs were used to teach content vocabulary. Students were divided into two groups as control group and experimental group consist each of 30 students. Convenience sample method was used to make the groups. An experimental group was taught with the help of GIFs and control group was taught generally.

### 4.GIFs

As earlier mentioned GIFs are nothing but motion pictures which continuously display multiple frames in a loop. Though it was introduced in late 80s, its usage drastically increased in recent social networks like Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. Social networkers started using GIFs to express their feelings and emotions. But in this research, we created GIFs from videos and used to teach vocabulary.

Cooking terms like Deglaze, Dredging, Basting, and Poaching etc were taken. These words are cooking action verbs which help in this GIF activity.

- Deglaze: it is a method of removing or scraping the food residue from a pan to a sauce
- Poaching: It's a method of cooking eggs without a shell in a hot water



#### ➤ Activity

- Step1: cooking verbs were selected
- Step 2: Cooking videos were selected
- Step 3: Selected videos were trimmed for the action verb

- Step 4: the trimmed part of the video converted to GIFs
- Step 5: Handouts were given
- Step 6: GIFs were displayed to find out the words
- Step 7: Students need to fill the up the questions provided in the handouts
- Step 8: Remaining GIFs were displayed to the students to find out the correct word
- Step 9: Students were analysed based on the sentences they framed out of words.

## 5. Results and discussions

### 5.1 Performance

The pre-test and post-test data were compared and analysed by using paired sample t-test. The five criteria for language proficiency focusing on writing were traced. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test was tabulated (Table 1) using paired sample t- test.

According to the test done, the signified p value is lesser than 0.05 for every component. The p value attained implies the significant differences between the variables of pre-test and post-test. The signified value below .05 for all the variables indicated the efficiency of the methodology used in this study. Thus the study has proved to have made considerable change in the adeptness of English writing skills through CLIL approach using GIFs.

As shown in figure-1 the results of pre-test showed comparatively a poor performance where participants lacked in vocabulary, sentence formation, spelling, coherence and content. The post-test graph showed a constant improvement in the proficiency level. The pre-test maximum value was only 14 whereas the post-test maximum mark lies at 25. The graph illustrates the effectiveness of using GIFs in CLIL classroom.

The control group was taught for 30minutes on the same topic of experimental group. The controlled group was not provided with any authentic materials other than the lecture. The study shows that there were least considerable changes between the pre-test and post-test values of the control group. The results of the experimental group dominate the controlled group's which assures the effectiveness of the implemented method. Figure 2 gives a clear picture on the performance of both the groups as a whole and witnesses the effectiveness of using GIFs to improve the English writing skills.

The experimental group shows comparatively high and affirmative variations from the performances of control group. As a result, facilitating the English writing skills using GIFs was found to be more effective.

A Feedback questionnaire was also administered to reassure the reasons for the effectiveness of the study. The visuals used in the GIF helped them to understand abstract concept, increase interest in the course, direct attention towards the passage and remember the content during the test and the students' responses were 95%, 100%, 95% and 100% respectively. As expected, a great number of the students preferred the application of GIFs in class similar analysis was carried out with closed-ended questions to support the results of the open-ended questions. Doubtlessly, 100% of the students viewed GIFs as an efficient tool guiding towards efficient learning. In addition, the participants believed that the GIFs attracted their attention. Nearly 80% of the learners preferred GIFs to aid the teaching learning process. They believed that GIFs are motivating, better in retaining their attention, beneficial to recall the material because of visually-assisted parts, and are organised and time efficient.

GIFs offered all opportunities to practice the language well as the language could be acquired by experience and practice (David Marsh, 2000); it has not only promoted linguistic competence but also created impact on conceptualization. It enhanced not only the subject knowledge but also developed content vocabulary. The study encouraged the learners to organize and reconceptualise their complex work into an easily assimilable form and thus gained deeper understanding of their work (Wharrad et al., 1995). The results, which confirmed the positive effects of GIFs on the experimental group, are lined with the findings of the study by Summer (2005) on the impact of GIFs in increasing learning and motivation.

The application of GIFs in the context of CLIL for different learning styles affected the learners' learning ability too. It helped the students to have access to various kinds of information in different manner so this variation leads the leaners to attend to the materials more carefully and eagerly. They were an excellent alternative medium for developing communication skills, involved students in the assessment process, encouraged learners to investigate the topic thoroughly, provided opportunities for peer-learning, promoted a positive attitude , explored and confronted misconceptions (Berry & Houston(1995).

As the result shown, the experimental group did illustrate significant gain in terms of achievement. In other words, the application of GIFs in the context of CLIL improved learners' content writing skills. At times in class, the approach acted as a great energizer for students. It served as a spring board to authentic and creative language use. They acted as a way to get learners to express the content in their own way. The students, who have seemed least engaged, suddenly can be seen in the classroom during the activity, as the students generally interact with each other and engage in the work. In contrast to the experimental group, the participants in control group couldn't improve their proficiency in content writing. The study brought a new change in the class and

helped them to investigate the topic thoroughly. It stimulated the curiosity, encouraged exploration and integration of concepts and provided students with a novel way of understanding, thereby improved content writing skills of the learners. The employment of GIFs has generated an enormous benefit towards education whereby students are more satisfied with their learning.

## 6. Conclusion and further research

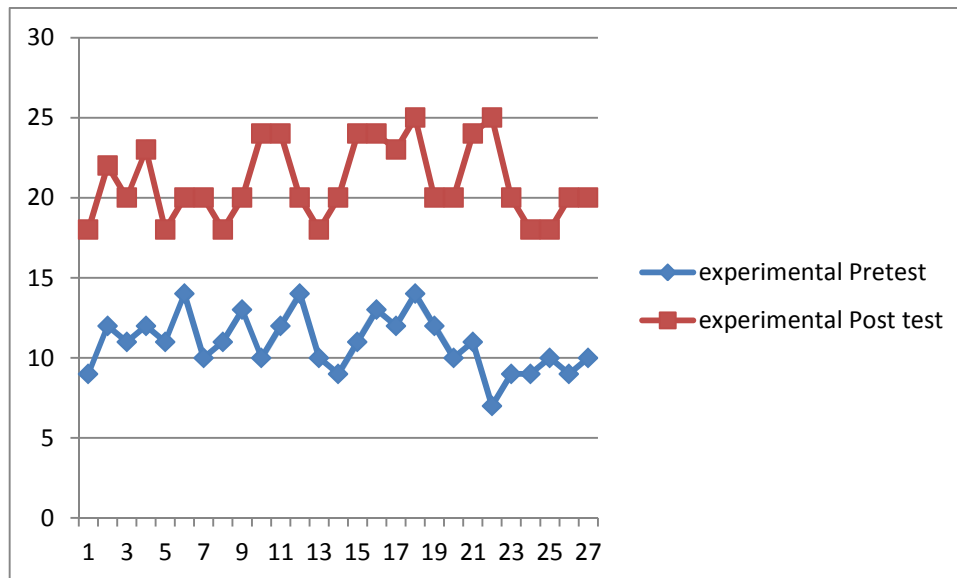
This experiment argues that using GIFs lead to more interesting and effective learning. Students enthusiastically involved in learning content vocabulary and they showed more interest to guess the word when the GIFs were displayed. We felt that usage of GIFs also impacts our teaching. Though this experiment was done with few numbers of students, further research can be done with large samples. This study also can be done on other vocabulary like technical, medical, biological and scientific.

## References

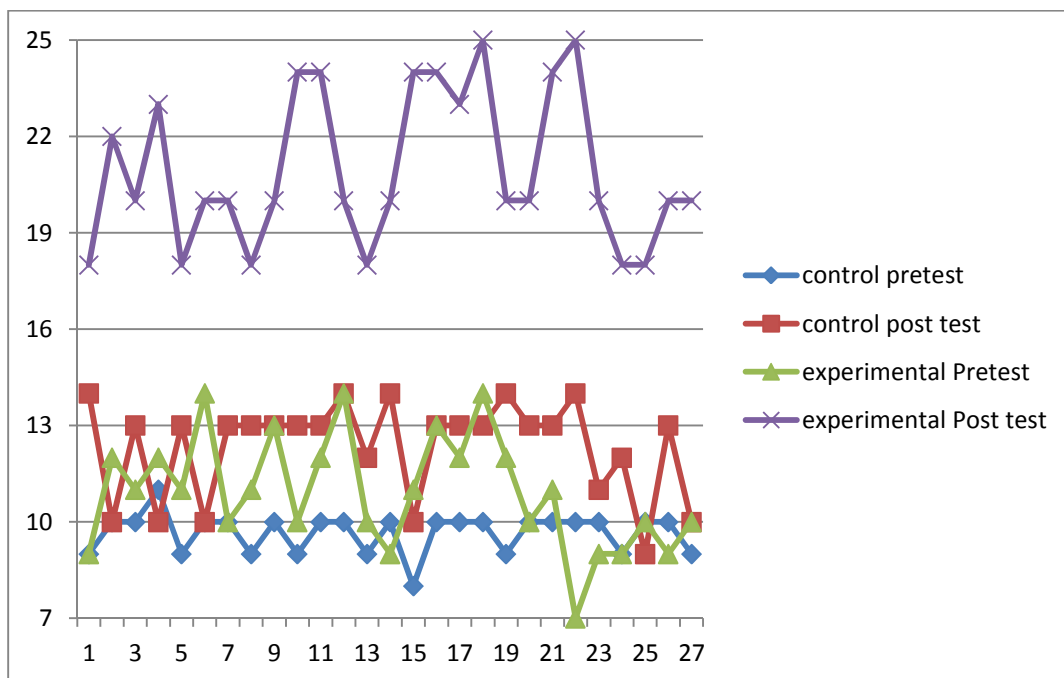
- Coyle D, H., & D.M, (2003) "CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning. Cambridge" Cambridge UP. .2010.
- Dale, L.,, Tanner., R &d Thornbury, S, " CLIL Activities: A Resource for Subject and Language Teachers".Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Lasagabaster, D & Sierra, J.M.( 2009) "Language Attitudes in CLIL and Traditional EFL classes". International CLIL Research Journal.
- Liubiniene,V(2009), " Developing Listening skills in CLIL". Studies about Languages.
- David, M., & Lange, G, (2013) "Using languages to learn and learning to use languages." Eds.D.Marsh-G.Lange.Finland:University of Jyväskylä.
- Josephine, M., (2010) "The Integrated Nature of CLIL: A Sociocultural Perspective". International CLIL Research Journal.
- Vasiljevic, T,(2012) " Techniques for Teaching Very Young Learners". Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Teaching English to Young Learners.

**TABLE I : TEST RESULTS OF VARIABLES IN PRE-TEST AND POST TEST**

	Variables	Paired Differences			Sig(2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean	
Pair 1	Vocabulary 1	-.778	.424	.082	.000
	Vocabulary 2	-1.667	.877	.169	.000
Pair 2	Spelling 1	-.741	.447	.086	.000
	Spelling 2	-1.185	1.241	.239	.000
Pair 3	Sentence formation 1	-.222	.577	.111	.002
	Sentence formation 2	-1.444	-1.086	.209	.000
Pair 4	Coherence 1	-.481	.580	.112	.000
	Coherence 2	-2.704	.669	.129	.000
Pair 5	Content 1	-.444	.751	.145	.005
	Content 2	-3.037	.706	.136	.000



**Fig.1.efficacy of CLIL gifs**



**Fig. 2. Performance of Experimental and Control group in pre and post-tests**